21. (new) The method of claim 19 wherein the listing form incorporates at least three predetermined keywords (keyword/1, keyword/2 and keyword/+);

two listings have been entered into the database category using the listing form;

the first listing being correlated with bids for keyword/1 and keyword/2, the sum of the bids for keyword/1 and keyword/2 equaling the predetermined cumulative bid amount for entering a listing;

the second listing being correlated with bids for keyword/2 and keyword/+, the sum of the bids for keyword/2 and keyword/+ equaling the predetermined cumulative bid amount for entering a listing;

wherein a search is performed by a user specifying keyword/2 and keyword/+ and the second listing is presented preferentially to the user.

22. (new) The method of claim 21 wherein keyword/+ comprises multiple predetermined keywords.

23. (new) The method of claim 19 wherein the predetermined cumulative bid amount for entering a listing into the database is the same for all listings corresponding to a category.

Remarks

Applicant appreciates the review of the Examiner and has cancelled prior claims and written new claims to clarify the scope of the Invention. Claims 1-18 have been cancelled and new claims 19-23 are respectfully submitted. The new claims pertain specifically to a bidding system for prioritizing search results of a category. The new claims are double spaced.

The prior art cited by the Examiner is noted and considered herein.

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The prior art cited by the Examiner is noted and considered herein.

U.S. Patent 6,014,665 by Culliss discloses a hierarchical method for organizing search results (Col 6, line 45-Col 7, line2). U.S. Patent application 2001/0037198 by Chen teaches a method for organizing database entries wherein specific listings are correlated to more general categories (Fig. 6F). U.S. Patent application 2002/0138353 by Schreiber et. al. also teaches a method for correlating specific listings to more general categories (Figs 3-7, 9A, 9B). Culliss, Chen and Schreiber do not anticipate the use of a bidding method for organizing data entries and search results.

U.S. Patent 5,794,210 by Goldhaber et. al., and U.S. Patent 5,974,398 by Hanson et. al. incorporate bidding methods for organizing data entries and search results. The methods of Goldhaber and Hanson concern forms of "push" advertising, advertising that is delivered to the user at times and locations chosen by the advertiser.

The system taught by Goldhaber facilitates the delivery of advertising to users who are paid to receive such advertising: "The present invention will allow advertisers to pay consumers directly for their time and attention" (column 4, lines 34-35). Goldhaber does not anticipate advertising in the form of entries retrieved in response to a user query.

The bidding method taught by Hanson serves to prioritize the advertising offers presented to the USER. USER profiles are central to the method: "The advertisers define USER characteristics of particular desirability and place a dollar value on having messages viewed by individual USERS based on the desirability of the USER" (column 1, lines 49-53). Like Goldhaber, Hanson does not anticipate advertising in the form of entries retrieved in response to a USER query.

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U.S. Patent Application 2002/0046084 by Steele et. al. discloses a bidding method that occurs in response to a USER's shopping list. The USER initiates the process by entering the shopping list "...into the system at step 1100" (paragraph 132). "...if price is the main driver a bidding loop could occur on each item, or for groups of items. This auctioning for the business of a person who is known to be ready to buy items on their shopping list provides vendors with an opportunity to reach a customer ready to make a purchase" (Paragraph 137). Bidding in Steele pertains to the goods and/or services being offered to the USER, not to the advertising itself.

U.S. Patent 6,269,361 by Davis et. al. Teaches a method wherein advertising is "pulled" by a USER in response to a keyword search. The bidding is central to the organization of a database of advertising entries. For each listing the advertiser supplies key words and assigns a bid value to each keyword (or keyword combination). When a USER initiates a search with a particular keyword, the listings corresponding to that keyword are prioritized by bid value: "The rank value generated by the bidding process determines where the ...listing will appear on the search results list page that is generated in response to a query of the search term" (Abstract). Davis does not limit the bid amount or constrain keyword choices. The present invention details a method for prioritizing listings pertaining to a category of listings. Bid amounts are entered for keywords describing attributes of the listing. The cumulative bid amount for the keywords is the same for each listing, but the amount bid for each particular keyword may vary.

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Respectfully submitted,

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"Applicant"

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